

### Remarks

Applicant and the undersigned would like to thank the Examiner for his efforts in the examination of this application.

#### **I. Rejection of Claims 15-18 and 45-48 under 35 USC 112, First Paragraph**

The Examiner has rejected Claims 15-18 and 45-48 under 35 USC 112, first paragraph, for nonenablement.

Claims 15, 17, 45, and 47 have been amended to provide consonance with the Specification. In particular, the clause "so that the eye can clear" has been replaced with --so that a cloud of ablated particles can dissipate--, which finds support in the Specification at page 7, lines 9-16. It is evident from the Specification that it is not the eye that is clearing, but rather the cloud of ablated particles.

Claims 15, 17, 45, and 47 are now believed enabled; Claims 16, 18, 46, and 48 dependent therefrom were not indicated as containing enablement problems and are also believed enabled.

#### **II. Rejection of Claims 1-29 and 31-48 under 35 USC 112, Second Paragraph**

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-29 and 31-48 under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, for indefiniteness.

The Examiner has indicated that Claims 6 and 30 were virtually identical in scope except for the use of the words "removed from" and "spaced apart from", respectively. Claim 30 has been canceled to remove this difficulty.

Further, all occurrences of the term "removed from" have been amended to recite --spaced apart from-- in the claims, in order to comport with the language in the Specification (see, for example, page 5, line 19), although it is respectfully believed that these terms would be understood by one of skill in the art to be interchangeable. Claims 1-6, 8, 12, 19-24, 37, 38, 41, 42, 45, and 47 have been thus amended.

The dependency of Claims 12 and 13 have been corrected to Claim 11, rather than Claim 10, which was a typographical error.

The amendments to Claims 15, 17, 45, and 47 have been discussed with regard to amending "so the eye can clear" to recite --so that a cloud of ablated particles can dissipate--.

Claims 38 and 42 have been amended to change the word "shot" to --pulse--, which has antecedent basis.

Claims 1-29 and 31-48 are now believed free from indefiniteness problems.

### **III. Rejection of Claims 1-14, 19-29, and 31-44 under 35 USC 102(b)**

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-14, 19-29, and 31-44 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Warner et al.; the Examiner has also rejected Claims 5, 6, 11, 14, 22-24, 28, 29, 34-36, and 41-44, by L'Esperance.

Independent Claims 1-7, 11, 15, 17, 19-37, 41, 45, and 47 have been amended to more particularly point out that which Applicants regard as their invention. Specifically, each occurrence of "second laser shot [pulse]" has been amended to add a recitation that the second laser shot [pulse] is --immediately subsequent to the first laser shot--. Similarly a third and fourth laser shot [pulse], if present, is indicated as being immediately subsequent to the second and third laser shot [pulse]. Language in support of this addition may be found in the Specification at page 5, lines 19-21, and page 7, lines 11-13.

It is respectfully believed that both Warner and L'Esperance teach away from the independent claims as amended. Warner, at column 4, lines 38-42, states that the "laser spot size is controlled by means 27, 29 to be a circle centered on the optical axis (beam axis 25'), and the diameter of the circle is caused to vary in the course of a predetermined ablation-producing exposure." Thus the laser spot remains fixed about the optical axis, and the diameter is changed over the exposure.

L'Esperance, at column 4, lines 20-23 and 34-37, states that "[t]he scan action is rectilineal, involving plural horizontal line scans with progressive vertical displacement to cover the field . . .", referring to FIG. 3, and, referring to FIG. 4, "a spiral course of scan, i.e., rotary sweeps at progressively changing radius, is involved in each coverage of the delineated field 30'." Thus a subsequent laser shot is directed progressively to a location immediately adjacent the preceding laser shot, whether rectilineally or in spiral fashion.

In contradistinction to Warner and L'Esperance, in the present invention, as embodied in the independent claims, each subsequent spot [pulse] is spaced apart from the preceding spot [pulse] to produce a distributed sequence. In particular, as recited in Claim 1, for example, each subsequent spot [pulse] is spaced apart from the preceding spot at a distance "sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from [a preceding] laser shot will not substantially interfere with the [subsequent] laser shot".

Therefore, it is respectfully believed that independent Claims 1-7, 11, 15, 17, 19-37, 41, 45, and 47 are not anticipated by either Warner or L'Esperance, and patentably distinguish thereover.

#### **IV. Rejection of Claims 1-14, 19-29, and 31-44 under Double Patenting**

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-14, 19-29, and 31-44 under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting.

A terminal disclaimer is therefore enclosed herewith.

#### **V. Information Disclosure Statements**

The Examiner has indicated that references did not accompany the IDS submission of October 3, 2001, received at the PTO on October 9, 2001. However, as discussed in a telephone conference with the Examiner, these references were indeed sent with the IDS form, and were apparently received by the Patent Office, as indicated by the enclosed copy of a returned post card.

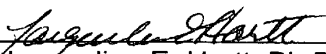
The Examiner is requested to inform Applicants as to whether the nonpatent and foreign literature should be resent for consideration in the case, or if the missing references have been subsequently found and entered.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the specification and claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "**Version With Markings to Show Changes Made.**"

Applicant respectfully submits that the above amendments place this application in a condition for allowance, and passage to issue is respectfully solicited. The Applicant and

the undersigned would like to again thank the Examiner for his efforts in the examination of this application and for reconsideration of the claims as amended in light of the arguments presented. If the further prosecution of the application can be facilitated through telephone interview between the Examiner and the undersigned, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned at the Examiner's convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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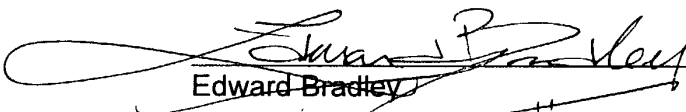
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**CERTIFICATE OF MAILING**

I hereby certify that the foregoing is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner of Patents, Washington D.C. 20231, this 20<sup>th</sup> day of August, 2002.

  
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Edward Bradley

**VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE**

Please cancel Claim 30 and amend Claims 1-8, 11-13, 15, 17, 19-38, 41, 42, 45, and 47 as follows:

1. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:
  - a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
  - b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
  - c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;
  - d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
    - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
    - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
    - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
  - e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
    - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
    - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
    - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
  - f) the second laser shot being [removed] spaced apart from the first laser shot;
  - g) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot; and,
  - h) repeating acts d) through g) a plurality of times.

2. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:
- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
  - b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
  - c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;
  - d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
    - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
    - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
    - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,
    - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
  - e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
    - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
    - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
    - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,
    - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
  - f) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
    - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
    - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
    - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,
    - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

g) the first, second and third laser shots being [removed] spaced apart from each other;

h) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

i) the distance between the center point of the second laser shot and the center point of the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;

j) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot; and,

k) repeating acts d) through j) a plurality of times.

3. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;

b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;

c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;

d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

iii) the laser shot having a center point;

iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

iii) the laser shot having a center point;

iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

f) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

iii) the laser shot having a center point;

iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

g) applying a fourth laser shot immediately subsequent to the third laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

iii) the laser shot having a center point;

iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

h) the first, second, third and fourth laser shots being [removed] spaced apart from each other;

i) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

j) the distance between the center point of the third laser shot and the center of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;



k) the distance between the center point of the fourth laser shot and the center point of the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the third laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot;

l) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;

m) the distance and time between the fourth laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot; and,

n) repeating acts d) through m) a plurality of times.

4. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a corneal surface of an eye;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

iii) the laser shot having a center point;

iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the corneal surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the corneal surface;

b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

iii) the laser shot having a center point;

iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the corneal surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the corneal surface;

c) the second laser shot being [removed] spaced apart from the first laser shot;

d) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

e) repeating acts a) through d) a plurality of times.

5. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a corneal surface of an eye;

- i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
- ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- iii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the corneal

surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the corneal surface;

b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the corneal surface;

- i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
- ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- iii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the corneal

surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the corneal surface;

c) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

- i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
- ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- iii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the corneal

surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the corneal surface;

d) the first, second and third laser shots being [removed] spaced apart from each other;

e) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

f) the distance between the center point of the second laser shot and the center of the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;

g) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot; and,

h) repeating acts a) through g) a plurality of times.

6. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a corneal surface of an eye;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

iii) the laser shot having a center point;

iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the corneal surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the corneal surface;

b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

iii) the laser shot having a center point;

iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the corneal surface; and,

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the corneal surface;

- c) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
  - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the corneal surface; and,
  - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the corneal surface;
- d) applying a fourth laser shot immediately subsequent to the third laser shot to the corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
  - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the corneal surface; and,
  - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the corneal surface;
- e) the first, second, third and fourth laser shots being [removed] spaced apart from each other;
- f) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;
- g) the distance between the center point of the third laser shot and the center of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- h) the distance between the center point of the fourth laser shot and the center point of the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the third laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot;
- i) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;

j) the distance and time between the fourth laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot; and,

k) repeating acts a) through j) a plurality of times.

7. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

folding a flap of corneal tissue of an eye aside, exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;

selecting a pattern for the placement of laser beam pulses on the exposed surface of the cornea;

the selected pattern comprising at least three points, the points being spaced apart from each other;

applying a first laser pulse to the exposed corneal surface at the first point in the pattern, applying a second laser pulse immediately subsequent to the first laser pulse to the exposed corneal surface at the second point in the pattern, and applying a third laser pulse immediately subsequent to the second laser pulse to the exposed corneal surface at the third point in the pattern;

the laser pulses ablating an area of tissue from the exposed surface of the cornea;

the ablated area of tissue from the second pulse being spaced apart from the ablated area of tissue from the first pulse; and,

the area of ablated tissue from the third pulse being spaced apart from the area of ablated tissue of the second pulse.

8. (amended) The method of claim 7 wherein the area of ablated tissue from the third shot is [removed] spaced apart from the area of tissue of the first shot.

11. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

selecting a pattern for the placement of laser beam pulses on an eye;

the selected pattern comprising at least three points; the points being spaced apart from each other;

applying a first laser pulse to the corneal surface of the eye at the first point in the pattern, applying a second laser pulse immediately subsequent to the first laser pulse to the corneal surface at the second point in the pattern, and applying a third laser pulse immediately subsequent to the second laser pulse to the corneal surface at the third point in the pattern;

the laser pulses ablating an area of tissue from the cornea of the eye;

the ablated area of tissue from the second pulse being spaced apart from the ablated area of tissue from the first pulse; and,

the area of ablated tissue from the third pulse being spaced apart from the area of ablated tissue of the second pulse.

12. (amended) The method of claim [10] 11 wherein the area of ablated tissue from the third shot is [removed] spaced apart from the area of tissue of the first shot.

13. (amended) The method of claim [10] 11 wherein the laser pulses are from an excimer laser.

15. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
- b) folding a flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
- c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;
- d) selecting a spatially distributed shot pattern for applying a laser beam to the exposed surface of the cornea;
- e) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,

iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

f) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

ii) the laser shot having a center point;

iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,

iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

g) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

ii) the laser shot having a center point;

iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,

iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

h) the second laser shot being spaced apart from the first laser shot; the third laser shot being spaced apart from the first and second laser shots so that [the eye can clear] a cloud of ablated particles can dissipate in one place before contacting that area again with another laser shot; and,

i) repeating acts e) through h) a plurality of times to apply the spatially distributed shot pattern.

17. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;

b) selecting a spatially distributed shot pattern of laser beam shots;

c) selecting an area of the cornea of the eye for applying the spatially distributed laser beam shot pattern;

- d) applying a first laser shot to the selected area of the corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the selected area of the corneal surface; and,
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the selected area of the corneal surface;
- f) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the selected area of the corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the selected area of the corneal surface; and,
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the selected area of the corneal surface;
- g) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the selected area of the corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the selected area of the corneal surface; and,
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the selected area of the corneal surface;
- h) the second laser shot being spaced apart from the first laser shot; the third laser shot being spaced apart from the first and second laser shots so that [the eye can clear] a cloud of ablated particles can dissipate in one place before contacting that area again with another laser shot; and,
- i) repeating acts e) through h) a plurality of times to apply the spatially distributed shot pattern.



19. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:
- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
  - b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
  - c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;
  - d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
    - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
    - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
  - e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
    - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
    - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
  - f) the second laser shot being [removed] spaced apart from the first laser shot;
  - g) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot; and,
  - h) repeating acts d) through g) a plurality of times.
20. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:
- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
  - b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
  - c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;

- d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- f) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- g) the first, second and third laser shots being [removed] spaced apart from each other;
- h) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

- i) the distance between the center point of the second laser shot and the center point of the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- j) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot; and,
- k) repeating acts d) through j) a plurality of times.

21. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
- b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
- c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;
- d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,
- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- f) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

- ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- g) applying a fourth laser shot immediately subsequent to the third laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
- i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and,
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- h) the first, second, third and fourth laser shots being [removed] spaced apart from each other;
- i) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;
- j) the distance between the center point of the third laser shot and the center of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- k) the distance between the center point of the fourth laser shot and the center point of the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the third laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot;
- l) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- m) the distance and time between the fourth laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot; and,

n) repeating acts d) through m) a plurality of times.

22. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a cornea of an eye;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the cornea;

- i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- ii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and,

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

c) the second laser shot being [removed] spaced apart from the first laser shot;

d) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

e) repeating acts a) through d) a plurality of times.

23. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a cornea of an eye;
  - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
  - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;
- b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the cornea;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;
- c) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed cornea;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;
- d) the first, second and third laser shots being [removed] spaced apart from each other;
- e) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;
- f) the distance between the center point of the second laser shot and the center of the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- g) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot; and,
- h) repeating acts a) through g) a plurality of times.

24. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a cornea of an eye;

- i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- ii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and,

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the cornea;

- i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- ii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

c) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the cornea;

- i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- ii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

d) applying a fourth laser shot immediately subsequent to the third laser shot to the cornea;

- i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- ii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

e) the first, second, third and fourth laser shots being [removed] spaced apart from each other;

f) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

g) the distance between the center point of the third laser shot and the center of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;

h) the distance between the center point of the fourth laser shot and the center point of the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the third laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot;

i) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;

j) the distance and time between the fourth laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot; and,

k) repeating acts a) through j) a plurality of times.

25. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;

b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;

c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;

d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

iii) the laser shot having a center point;

iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;



e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;  
ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;  
iii) the laser shot having a center point;  
iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

f) the second laser shot being spaced apart from the first laser shot;

g) the distance and time between the first laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot; and,

h) repeating acts d) through g) a plurality of times.

26. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;

b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;

c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;

d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

iii) the laser shot having a center point;

iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and

v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;

- ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- iii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
- v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- f) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
  - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- g) the first, second and third laser shots being spaced apart from each other;
- h) the distance and time between the first laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;
- i) the distance between the second laser shot and the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- j) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot; and,
- k) repeating acts d) through j) a plurality of times.

27. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;

- b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
- c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;
- d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
  - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
  - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- f) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
  - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - iii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- g) applying a fourth laser shot immediately subsequent to the third laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

- i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
- ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- iii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
- v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- h) the first, second, third and fourth laser shots being spaced apart from each other;
- i) the distance and time between the first laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;
- j) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- k) the distance and time between the fourth laser shot and the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the third laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot;
- l) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- m) the distance and time between the fourth laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot; and,
- n) repeating acts d) through m) a plurality of times.

28. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a cornea of an eye;
  - i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
  - ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

- iii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the cornea;

- i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
- ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- iii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and,

- v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

c) the second laser shot being spaced apart from the first laser shot;

d) the distance and time between the first laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

e) repeating acts a) through d) a plurality of times.

29. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a cornea of an eye;

- i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
- ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- iii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the cornea;

- i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
- ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

- iii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

c) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed cornea;

- i) the laser shot having a wavelength of 193 nanometers;
- ii) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- iii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iv) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- v) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

d) the first, second and third laser shots being spaced apart from each other;

e) the distance and time between the first laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

f) the distance and time between the second laser shot and the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;

g) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot; and,

- h) repeating acts a) through g) a plurality of times.

31. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
- b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
- c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;
- d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;

- i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- ii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- f) the second laser shot being spaced apart from the first laser shot;
- g) the distance and time between the first laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot; and,
- h) repeating acts d) through g) a plurality of times.

32. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
- b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
- c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;
- d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- f) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- g) the first, second and third laser shots being spaced apart from each other;
- h) the distance and time between the first laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;
- i) the distance between the second laser shot and the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- j) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot; and,
- k) repeating acts d) through j) a plurality of times.



33. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:
- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
  - b) folding a surface flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
  - c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;
  - d) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
    - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
    - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
    - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
  - e) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
    - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
    - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
    - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
  - f) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
    - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
    - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
    - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
  - g) applying a fourth laser shot immediately subsequent to the third laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;

- ii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- h) the first, second, third and fourth laser shots being spaced apart from each other;
- i) the distance and time between the first laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;
- j) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- k) the distance and time between the fourth laser shot and the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the third laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot;
- l) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;
- m) the distance and time between the fourth laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot; and,
- n) repeating acts d) through m) a plurality of times.

34. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a cornea of an eye;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;
- b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the cornea;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and,

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;
- c) the second laser shot being spaced apart from the first laser shot;
- d) the distance and time between the first laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;
- e) repeating acts a) through d) a plurality of times.

35. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a cornea of an eye;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;
- b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the cornea;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the

cornea; and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;
- c) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed cornea;

- i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- ii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;
- d) the first, second and third laser shots being spaced apart from each

other;

e) the distance and time between the first laser shot and the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

f) the distance and time between the second laser shot and the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;

g) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot; and,

- h) repeating acts a) through g) a plurality of times.

36. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) applying a first laser shot to a selected area of a cornea of an eye;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;

and

- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;

b) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the cornea;

- i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
- ii) the laser shot having a center point;

iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;  
and

iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;  
c) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the cornea;

i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;  
ii) the laser shot having a center point;  
iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;  
and

iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;  
d) applying a fourth laser shot immediately subsequent to the third laser shot to the cornea;

i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;  
ii) the laser shot having a center point;  
iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the cornea;  
and

iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the cornea;  
e) the first, second, third and fourth laser shots being spaced apart from each other;

f) the distance between the center point of the first laser shot and the center point of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the second laser shot;

g) the distance between the center point of the third laser shot and the center of the second laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the second laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;

h) the distance between the center point of the fourth laser shot and the center point of the third laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the third laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot;

i) the distance and time between the third laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the third laser shot;

j) the distance and time between the fourth laser shot and the first laser shot being sufficient so that any plume of ablated material from the first laser shot will not substantially interfere with the fourth laser shot; and,

k) repeating acts a) through j) a plurality of times.

37. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

folding a flap of corneal tissue of an eye aside, exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;

selecting a pattern for the placement of laser beam pulses on the exposed surface of the cornea;

the selected pattern comprising at least three points;

applying a first laser pulse to the exposed corneal surface at the first point in the pattern, applying a second laser pulse immediately subsequent to the first laser pulse to the exposed corneal surface at the second point in the pattern, and applying a third laser pulse immediately subsequent to the second laser pulse to the exposed corneal surface at the third point in the pattern;

the laser pulses ablating an area of tissue from the exposed surface of the cornea;

the ablated area of tissue from the second pulse being [removed] spaced apart from the ablated area of tissue from the first pulse; and,

the area of ablated tissue from the third pulse being [removed] spaced apart from the area of ablated tissue of the second pulse.

38. (amended) The method of claim 37 wherein the area of ablated tissue from the third [shot] pulse is [removed] spaced apart from the area of tissue of the first shot.

41. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

selecting a pattern for the placement of laser beam pulses on an eye;  
the selected pattern comprising at least three points;  
applying a first laser pulse to the corneal surface of the eye at the first point in the pattern, applying a second laser pulse immediately subsequent to the first laser pulse to the corneal surface at the second point in the pattern, and applying a third laser pulse immediately subsequent to the second laser pulse to the corneal surface at the third point in the pattern;  
the laser pulses ablating an area of tissue from the cornea of the eye;  
the ablated area of tissue from the second pulse being [removed] spaced apart from the ablated area of tissue from the first pulse; and,  
the area of ablated tissue from the third pulse being removed from the area of ablated tissue of the second pulse.

42. (amended) The method of claim 41 wherein the area of ablated tissue from the third [shot] pulse is [removed] spaced apart from the area of tissue of the first shot.

45. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:

- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
- b) folding a flap of corneal tissue of the selected eye aside;
- c) exposing a surface of the cornea under the flap;
- d) selecting a spatially distributed shot pattern for applying a laser beam to the exposed surface of the cornea;
- e) applying a first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;

- f) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- g) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the exposed corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the exposed corneal surface; and
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the exposed corneal surface;
- h) the second laser shot being [removed] spaced apart from the first laser shot; the third laser shot being [removed] spaced apart from the first and second laser shots so that [the eye can clear] a cloud of ablated particles can dissipate in one place before contacting that area again with another laser shot; and,
- i) repeating acts e) through h) a plurality of times to apply the spatially distributed shot pattern.

47. (amended) A method for correcting vision comprising:
- a) selecting a patient's eye for treatment;
  - b) selecting a spatially distributed shot pattern of laser beam shots;
  - c) selecting an area of the cornea of the eye for applying the spatially distributed laser beam shot pattern;
  - d) applying a first laser shot to the selected area of the corneal surface;
    - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;



- ii) the laser shot having a center point;
- iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the selected area of the corneal surface; and
- iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the selected area of the corneal surface;
- f) applying a second laser shot immediately subsequent to the first laser shot to the selected area of the corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the selected area of the corneal surface; and
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the selected area of the corneal surface;
- g) applying a third laser shot immediately subsequent to the second laser shot to the selected area of the corneal surface;
  - i) the laser shot having a diameter and an area;
  - ii) the laser shot having a center point;
  - iii) the laser shot area being smaller than the area of the selected area of the corneal surface; and,
  - iv) the laser shot ablating corneal tissue from the selected area of the corneal surface;
- h) the second laser shot being [removed] spaced apart from the first laser shot; the third laser shot being [removed] spaced apart from the first and second laser shots so that [the eye can clear] a cloud of ablated particles can dissipate in one place before contacting that area again with another laser shot; and,
- i) repeating acts e) through h) a plurality of times to apply the spatially distributed shot pattern.